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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 AMMAN 001716

SIPDIS

STATE FOR NEA/ARN, NEA/PA, NEA/AIA, INR/NESA, R/MR,
I/GNEA, B/BXN, B/BRN, NEA/PPD, NEA/IPA FOR ALTERMEN
USAID/ANE/MEA
LONDON FOR GOLDRICH
PARIS FOR O'FRIEL

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: KMDR JO
SUBJECT: JORDAN: SPECIAL MEDIA REACTION ON WAR IN IRAQ

NEWS REPORTS

NEWS ABOUT THE WAR IN IRAQ DOMINATED JORDAN'S DAILIES
ON SATURDAY MARCH 22. THE MAIN ELEMENTS WERE THE
FOLLOWING:

-- THE START AND PROGRESS OF THE "PRINCIPAL AIR AND
LAND ATTACK ON IRAQ," ACCORDING TO SEMI-OFFICIAL
INFLUENTIAL ARABIC DAILY AL-RAI AND CENTER-LEFT,
INFLUENTIAL ARABIC DAILY AL-DUSTOUR, WHICH
INDEPENDENT, MASS-APPEAL ARABIC DAILY AL-ARAB AL-YAWM
REFERRED TO AS: "BARBARIC BOMBING SETS BAGHDAD'S NIGHT
ABLAZE."

-- THE DEMONSTRATIONS IN JORDAN, WHICH RESULTED IN
SOME INCIDENTS WITH THE POLICE IN AMMAN, WHEN
DEMONSTRATORS CHANTED: "SO WHERE IS THE ARAB ARMY?"
[THE OFFICIAL NAME OF THE JORDANIAN ARMED FORCES,] AND
IN THE TRIBAL CITY OF MA'AN. THE KING GAVE AN ADDRESS
IN WHICH ASSURED JORDANIANS THAT: "OUR SENTIMENTS ARE
IDENTICAL TO YOURS" AND ENJOINED THEM TO EXPRESS THEIR
SENTIMENTS IN A PEACEFUL AND CIVILIZED MANNER. IN
COVERING THE DEMONSTRATIONS, THE DAILIES USED THE TERM
"AGGRESSION AGAINST IRAQ" IN DESCRIBING THE CONFLICT.

-- THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS STATED THAT JORDAN
HAS NOT RECEIVED A REQUEST FROM THE U.S. TO EXPEL
IRAQI DIPLOMATS.

-- THE REFUGEE CAMPS AT RUWEISHED, WHERE REFUGEES
(NON-IRAQI) PRAISED THE JORDANIAN AUTHORITIES FOR
RECEIVING THEM.

-- THE POSITIONS OF DIFFERENT GOVERNMENTS, MAINLY
THOSE OF FRANCE AND RUSSIA, AS WELL AS THE VATICAN.

EDITORIAL COMMENTARY

-- THE MOST DANGEROUS FOR WORLD PEACE
LEADING DAILY COLUMNIST FAHED AL-FANEK WROTE IN SEMI-
OFFICIAL INFLUENTIAL ARABIC DAILY AL-RAI ON MARCH 22:
"ALTHOUGH AMERICAN IMPERIALISM WAS AN ACCUSATION
LEVELLED AGAINST THE U.S. DURING THE COLD WAR, IT HAS
NOW DEVELOPED INTO AN OPEN CALL BY THE NEO-
CONSERVATIVES, WHO WANT THE U.S. TO TAKE THIS UNIQUE
HISTORIC OPPORTUNITY FOR DOMINATING THE FIVE
CONTINENTS WITH A MILLION-MAN ARMY, AND TO ASSUME THE
RIGHT TO REPLACE REGIMES THAT IT DOES NOT LIKE, WITH
LACKEYS. THE WORLD, THEREFORE, STARTED TO SEE BUSH AS
THE MOST DANGEROUS MAN FOR WORLD PEACE, AND THE U.S.
AS THE MOST DANGEROUS STATE TO WORLD PEACE. EVENTS
NOW PROVE THIS OUTLOOK."

-- THE TRINITY OF LOBBIES IN THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION
DAILY COLUMNIST MALIK ATHAMNEH WROTE IN SEMI-OFFICIAL
INFLUENTIAL ARABIC DAILY AL-RAI ON MARCH 22: "BUSH AND
BIN LADEN ARE ALIKE ON ONE VERY CRUCIAL POINT, THEIR
WILL TO DIVIDE THE WORLD INTO TWO CAMPS, 'WITH US AND
AGAINST US.' THIS LEAVES MOST OF US ON THE MARGIN OF
EVENTS, IN THE EPICENTER OF CONFLICT. THERE IS A
DIABOLICAL ALLIANCE WITHIN THE ADMINISTRATION COMPOSED
OF THE TRINITY OF ZIONIST CHRISTIAN EVANGELISM, THE
GIANT ECONOMIC LOBBY, AND THE EVER-PRESENT ZIONIST
LOBBY THAT SERVES ONLY ISRAEL."

-- OBSERVATIONS ON THE MARGIN OF STEADFASTNESS
DAILY COLUMNIST NAHED HATTAR WROTE IN INDEPENDENT,
MASS-APPEAL ARABIC DAILY AL-ARAB AL-YAWM ON MARCH 22:
"WHAT MATTERS NOW IS THAT THERE ARE MEN WHO ARE
FIGHTING TO DEFEND THE TERRITORY, DIGNITY, AND FUTURE
OF IRAQ AND ALL THE ARABS. THE WILL TO FIGHT IS THE
ONLY HOLY THING AT A HISTORIC MOMENT THAT WILL STAY
WITH US FOR A LONG TIME YET. THIS MESSAGE WILL NOT
REACH THE AMERICANIZED AND RUSTY HEARTS AND MINDS OF
THE PSEUDO-INTELLECTUALS WHO THEORIZIZE TO JUSTIFY
SURRENDER AND SLAVERY, BUT IT HAS REACHED THE HEARTS
AND MINDS OF THE CHILDREN OF EGYPT. SO FAR THERE HAS
NOT BEEN A SINGLE OFFICIAL CONDEMNATION OF THE
AGGRESSION AGAINST IRAQ. NOT A SINGLE CALL, OR AT
LEAST A PLEA TO STOP THE MILITARY OPERATIONS AGAINST
OUR BROTHERS. NOT A SINGLE HINT THAT THE ANGLO-

AMERICAN WAR ON IRAQ IS BEING CONDUCTED OUTSIDE INTERNATIONAL LEGITIMACY. COULD WE NOT AT LEAST REGURGITATE THE DECLARATIONS OF THE ARAB SUMMIT AT SHARM EL-SHEIKH, WHICH WE APPROVED?"

-- THE AGGRESSION HAS STARTED
ATEF AL-JOLANI, CHIEF EDITOR OF ASSABEEL (INDEPENDENT WEEKLY REFLECTING THE VIEWS OF THE ISLAMIC ACTION FRONT) WROTE ON MARCH 22: "THE AGGRESSION HAS STARTED, AND THE RABID AMERICAN MISSILES WERE LAUNCHED AGAINST IRAQ, TO DESTROY IT AND KILL ITS PEOPLE BEFORE OCCUPYING IT. THE IRAQI PEOPLE STAND ALONE FACING THE AGGRESSION, AND WE REGRET THAT WE CAN DO NOTHING BUT WATCH, OBSERVE, AND STAY MESMERIZED BEFORE SATELLITE TV STATIONS TO FOLLOW THE LATEST DEVELOPMENTS OF THE AGGRESSION. OF COURSE, ARAB LEADERS ARE IN THE SAME BOAT, EXCEPT THAT WE HOPE AND PRAY THAT BUSH AND BLAIR WILL PAY FOR THEIR WICKED DEEDS, WHILE OUR LEADERS HOPE AND PRAY THAT THE PROBLEM OF IRAQ WILL BE OUT OF THE WAY VERY SOON. GNEHM